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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ASTANA 001843

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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN PRESSES AGAIN ON OSCE SUMMIT, ANNUAL  
BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS

REF: ASTANA 1840

Classified By: Ambassador Richard E. Hoagland

¶1. (C) To follow up on the October 7-8 visit to Astana by Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman, the Ambassador met on October 12 with Deputy Foreign Kairat Umarov to seek clarification how the Foreign Ministry would coordinate Kazakhstan's inter-agency process to designate a single lead entity for the U.S.-funded biological threat reduction Central Reference Laboratory to be built in Almaty (reftel). Umarov raised two other points -- Kazakhstan's keen desire to organize an OSCE summit during its 2010 chairmanship, and the proposed U.S.-Kazakhstan Annual Bilateral Consultations (ABC). He provided a non-paper on the ABC (text in para six below) that included a proposal that the ABC be designated the "Nazarbayev-Obama Commission." Please see action request in para seven below.

OSCE SUMMIT

¶2. (C) Umarov reiterated Kazakhstan's standard arguments for organizing an OSCE summit during its 2010 chairmanship, and requested U.S. support for this effort. He said that Kazakhstan has considered several summit agendas, including religious tolerance and non-proliferation, but is leaning increasingly strongly toward Afghanistan, especially after Foreign Minister Saudabayev's recent meetings in New York with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke. Umarov said, "This (topic) frankly would not be easy for us. It would not be very popular domestically and most certainly not with 'our big partner' (Russia) that is pushing us hard for an OSCE summit to promote a new European Security Treaty. The 'big partner' does not want OSCE to become involved in Afghanistan. However, we understand that Afghanistan is President Obama's most serious and far-reaching foreign-policy priority -- it will be his defining moment. We want to be helpful to your president. We have said from the beginning we want to be in lock-step

with you to thank you for allowing us to become the OSCE chairman. This is a great honor for us, and it is only because the United States agreed." The Ambassador assured Umarov that he would convey this information and seek Washington's views.

#### ANNUAL BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS

13. (C) Passing over a non-paper in Russian and in English, Umarov said that Kazakhstan warmly welcomes the U.S. initiative to establish the ABC as soon as possible. Kazakhstan is ready to engage fully on all dimensions of the ABC, but believes it is necessary that Presidents Obama and Nazarbayev head the ABC as a Presidential Commission "to keep things moving forward, because bureaucracies always tend to bog down. We're at the smoothest point in our bilateral relationship that we've seen for the past 10 years. Most of us what to take advantage of that to move forward in all, I emphasize all, key areas." The Ambassador cautioned that Washington is not likely to approve a Presidential Commission, but that we would be fully committed to move forward our bilateral relations, using the mechanism of the ABC to the fullest extent possible.

14. (C) At the end of the meeting, Umarov dismissed Americas Director Askar Tazhiyev and his own note-taker. Walking the Ambassador into his private office, he said he had been authorized to explain further. "We want you to understand that the bilateral relationship is at a very sensitive point. President Nazarbayev is increasingly pleased with its substance, tone, and balance, and feels he can trust the

ASTANA 00001843 002 OF 003

United States more than ever before. That's why he named Saudabayev Foreign Minister. The election of President Obama, who is respected in Kazakhstan, has given President Nazarbayev the political space he needs to enhance the U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship. The Nobel Peace Prize has only improved the public's good feelings about President Obama and the United States. Nazarbayev increasingly feels political pressure from Russia and economic pressure from China. He needs the symbolic visibility of a strong U.S. relationship to maintain balance -- thus, our proposal for a presidential commission. Further, while the majority of the government is enthusiastic about an enhanced relationship with the United States, a few agencies oppose it strongly and argue forcefully to Nazarbayev that he cannot trust the United States because it wants to overthrow him and steal Kazakhstan's natural resources."

15. (C) The Ambassador suggested that this is the worst possible kind of old-think. Umarov replied, "Maybe. But it is our reality, and we're asking you to understand and help us move forward. The president is thinking and calculating geopolitically, as he has always done. We hope that you will communicate this to your decision-makers." The Ambassador responded that he understood the wider context of this explanation and would pass these views to Washington. He cautioned that the Washington inter-agency process is long and complicated, but that these views would be factored into the on-going policy debates.

16. (SBU) BEGIN TEXT OF NON-PAPER:

(Title) Annual Bilateral Consultations

Kazakhstan has reviewed the United States' proposals to establish regular bilateral policy consultations in order to enlarge and deepen our strategic partnership.

We agree with the proposal to arrange consultations in alternating capitals on an annual basis with a six-month review between annual sessions to monitor agreed work-plan time-lines.

We support the suggestion to divide the Commission's activity

in the form of Working Groups covering the following subjects: political, security, human dimension, economic and development issues, energy.

We agree with the idea to involve into the Working Group on Economic and Development Issues questions of business and business organizations, and to include American and Kazakh NGOs in the Working Group on the Human Dimension.

We also support that these consultations will take into account existing bilateral and regional initiatives such as the bilateral talks being planned under the auspices of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), the Public Private Economic Partnership Initiative (PPEPI), and the Kazakh-American Joint Commission on Energy Partnership.

We propose to institutionalize such consultations in a format of Kazakh-American Commission at the highest level -- "Nazarbayev-Obama Commission." At the same time, heads of the foreign offices of our States will coordinate the Commission's work.

Also, according to the previous agreements, we expect to receive the proposals for the heads of each Working Group from the American side.

END TEXT.

ASTANA 00001843 003 OF 003

17. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Because we have received this proposal officially, we request Washington's guidance on how to respond. END ACTION REQUEST.  
HOAGLAND